

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI DHOTRE SANJAY SHAMRAO): (a) 1155 villages have been covered under Bima Gram Yojana in Gujarat so far.

(b) 17,568 villages are not covered under Bima Gram Yojana in Gujarat.

(c) and (d) Bima Gram Yojana is an initiative of Department of Posts to provide life insurance to the people living in rural areas. The premium paying capacity of a person is one of the critical elements in implementation of this initiative. Efforts are made to cover as many villages as possible under the Bima Gram Yojana initiative of the Department of Posts in a phased manner.

Voluntary retirement to BSNL staff

1621. SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the BSNL wants to give voluntary retirement to half of its workforce which is around 70 to 80 thousand employees;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what action Government is contemplating in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI DHOTRE SANJAY SHAMRAO): (a) to (c) The Cabinet in the meeting held on 23.10.2019 approved the revival plan for Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) which *inter-alia* includes, reduction in staff cost through a Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) for the employees of age 50 years and above.

The VRS was offered by BSNL to its employees on 04.11.2019. The scheme was closed on 03.12.2019. After the closure of the scheme, 78,569 employees of BSNL opted for the VRS. All VRS optees have retired voluntarily on 31.01.2020.

Revival plan of BSNL and MTNL

1622. SHRI M. SHANMUGAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has approved revival plan of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. (MTNL);